United Nations A/66/702–S/2012/98

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
17 February 2012

Original: English

**General Assembly**
**Sixty-sixth session**
Agenda item 35
**Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development**

**Security Council**
**Sixty-seventh year**

## Identical letters dated 15 February 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 15 February 2012, in reaction to the formation of a so-called Ossetian battalion at the 4th Guards' military base of Russian occupation troops in the occupied region of Tskhinvali (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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## Annex to the identical letters dated 15 February 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

## Statement of the Georgian Foreign Ministry in reaction to the formation of a so-called Ossetian battalion at the 4th Guards' military base of Russian occupation troops in the occupied region of Tskhinvali

Mass media sources recently reported that a so-called "Ossetian battalion" is being formed at the Russian 4th Guards' military base in the occupied region of Tskhinvali. According to these reports, the "Ossetian battalion" is to be made up of local residents recruited in the occupied region whose salaries will be equal to those paid to men serving in the Russian army.

The Georgian Foreign Ministry has on more than one occasion drawn the international community's attention to the fact that the Russian Federation is continuing to build up its military forces, to strengthen its military infrastructure and to deploy offensive weapons in Georgia's occupied regions. These regions have, in fact, been turned into large military bases, and their inhabitants are either employed in the Russian military bases themselves or are serving with the Russian occupation troops, as most recently attested by the fact of the creation of the so-called "Ossetian battalion".

It should also be emphasized that additional financial and material resources are being allocated for the strengthening of the Russian occupation troops against a background of daily accidents in military (including nuclear) facilities, which poses a real threat to the Russian population as well as to the population of neighbouring countries and indeed to the world as a whole.

Tbilisi, 15 February 2012